

In the News

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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Message from the Mayor

Nelson Mandela said it best: "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." Over the past few weeks, we've been busy in the District of Columbia with many education-related ceremonies and meetings in the spirit of those words.

The District of Columbia Teacher of the Year for 2002 is Dr. Barry Gene Sprague, a science resource teacher and science coordinator at Park View Elementary School. Dr. Sprague's philosophy is based on the belief that we are all global citizens, who share a responsibility for solving the world's problems and for understanding and caring for people of different cultures.

As Teacher of the Year, Dr. Sprague will have many opportunities available to him in the coming year. First, he will attend the Teacher of the Year Conference and the National Teachers Forum to exchange ideas with top educators from around the country. In April, Dr. Sprague is scheduled to meet President Bush, and after that, he will travel Huntsville, Alabama, to Space Camp.

The DC Teacher of the Year Award is a part of the national Teacher of the Year Program, which seeks to recognize the contributions of the American classroom teacher.

In other news, on February 6, The Walt Disney Co. donated 210,000 books to DC Public Schools (DCPS) through its "Reading Together Initiative." Disney made the donation to DCPS students and their families through First Book National Book Bank. The donation, for which our city is extremely grateful, represents a portion of Disney's commitment to donate one million books to First Book National Book Bank. The bank will distribute the books to DCPS, which will in turn distribute the books to the children.

As I said in my inauguration speech last month, my vision is a simple one: our city must send a clear and powerful message that we care about our children, and we will not let them fail.

Improving education is one of the most crucial elements to improving our city. It is key to attracting 100,000 new residents, who want to live and raise children in the District.

It will take all of us together to make sure that every child in our city starts school ready to learn, enters 3rd grade proficient in reading, and begins 7th grade able to excel in math. This commitment to educating our children is the right thing to do and the smart thing to do. Our future demands no less.



AGENCY WEBSITES

[Office of Tax and Revenue](#)

[Department of Parks and Recreation](#)

[Department of Employment Services](#)

[Metropolitan Police Department](#)

[Office of Boards and Commissions](#)

[Commission on the Arts and Humanities](#)

Employee Profile

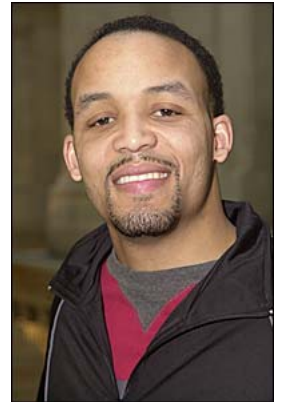
"I love my job because every day it's something new, and I really feel like I'm making a difference by educating the people of the District about bioterrorism," says Briant Keith Coleman, the public information officer in the DC Department of Health's Emergency Health and Medical Services Administration.

Briant is a new employee in a new position created to provide bioterrorism information to the public, to health providers, and to District employees. Since taking the position, Briant created a new Bioterrorism Preparedness website (www.bioterrorism.dc.gov) for the District, and he developed an Advisory Community Committee to plan an outreach campaign on the subject.

Briant also spearheaded the training for physicians, nurses, and community volunteers on smallpox. Under his direction, a Smallpox Community Guide has been printed, and it is available on the Bioterrorism website. This is the first community guide on smallpox printed by any state.

"The bioterrorism website is user-friendly, attractive, and was built in record time," said Dr. Michael Richardson, Senior Deputy Director of Medical Affairs for the District's Department of Health. "Briant has made a tremendous impact on this department in a very short time."

Thanks, Briant, for hitting the ground running!



Briant Keith Coleman

February Is Black History Month

What better way to kick-off Black History Month than by remembering, reflecting upon, and honoring Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall? That's exactly what we did on January 31, when we celebrated the release of the Thurgood Marshall postage stamp and pledged our ongoing support for the Thurgood Marshall Center for Service on 12th Street in Northwest.

On January 31, I also pledged the District's continued involvement in keeping the Thurgood Marshall Center for Service and Heritage open and operating. Through the Revenue Bond Program, the District gave \$3.7 million to the center, which is a full service, community empowerment center for residents of all ages. Bond proceeds will be used to refinance existing loans for rehabilitation of the historic facility (formerly the Anthony Bowen YMCA) located in the Shaw neighborhood of the District. A former slave founded the Anthony Bowen YMCA in 1853, and it was the first YMCA in the world for African Americans.

The Thurgood Marshall Center serves as the home for six non-profit community organizations that provide services to at-risk youth, children, and the elderly.

Another important Black History event is on the horizon. DC Parks and Recreation will host the nation's top young swimmers at the 17th Annual Black History Invitational Swim Meet. The event will be held on February 15 and 16 at the UDC Aquatic Center (Building 47), located on the university's Van Ness campus at 4200 Connecticut Avenue, NW. Saturday's events take place from 7 am to 5 pm, and Sunday's meets are from 9 am to 4 pm.

For more information on Black History events taking place around the city, go to www.dc.gov.



LINK TO OTHER WEBSITES

[DC Agenda](#)

[Hands on DC](#)

[DC Convention and Tourism](#)

[DC Public Library](#)

Best Buy Is Coming to DC

There's more good news ahead for people in our city who love to shop. The District has helped find appropriate retailers for a building in Tenleytown, vacant since the Hechinger hardware chain left the site three years ago. Home Depot considered the location but decided against it, in part, because of space. The building, a former Sears, Roebuck and Co. store, is designated historic.

Now, Minneapolis-based electronics chain Best Buy Co., Inc. will occupy about 45,000 square feet at street level on Wisconsin Avenue, NW. Other retailers, including the Container Store, are expected to occupy the remaining 25,000 square feet of space. The developers also plan to build a parking lot and four levels of rental apartments, about 175 units, on top of the retail space.

With the addition of these retailers, our city will soon have a stunning new retail development that creates hundreds of jobs. Also, we will likely see a housing development that will create nearly 200 new market-rate housing units in our city. This new transit-oriented development, with the aid of the Tenleytown Metrorail station on the red line, will bring shoppers and economic development to this corner of the District.

This project and others like it represent my vision of opportunity for all in our city. We're bringing jobs to our citizens, along with economic development, to every corner of the District. From Northeast to Northwest, and from Southeast to Southwest, we're working hard to entice retailers and developers to fertile ground. We're working to bring stores like Best Buy to Tenleytown, and stores like Target to Columbia Heights. Last year, we helped bring Giant Food and Home Depot to Brentwood in Ward 5.

If we can provide more housing, shopping, and entertainment options, we can work toward achieving my goal of bringing 100,000 new residents to the District in the next 10 years.

Plans in Progress for St. Elizabeths

On January 30, I was pleased to launch the official planning process for the St. Elizabeths Hospital campus. This is the first official step in this process and should mobilize and excite residents about the future of St. Elizabeths. This step begins an important revitalization effort for Ward 8 and the District of Columbia.

The campus of St. Elizabeths Hospital, established in 1852 and opened in 1855, has cared for its population for over 147 years. The neighborhoods of Congress Heights, Barry Farm, Hillside, Fort Stanton, Douglass, and Shipley grew up around and embraced the hospital as part of the Ward 8 community.

The needs of the hospital have changed, and it will serve the needs of the mentally ill in a soon to-be-built smaller complex on the East Campus. We now have a once in a lifetime opportunity to re-build one of the District's most valuable assets, and we have an opportunity to create new jobs and amenities for our residents.

The neighborhoods of Ward 8 are on the upswing of revitalization too. Over 1,800 units of new single family and multi-family housing have been constructed throughout the ward. This influx of new housing helps provide the people and the income that will attract and sustain new businesses in Ward 8.

We're investing for our citizens in many other ways. We're investing at the Fort Greble and Bald Eagle Recreation Centers. We're investing at the Southeast Tennis and Learning Center and at the Walter Washington Tennis Courts. We're also working with neighborhood partners and investing in a new government center and commercial development at the Anacostia Gateway.

We are creating a vision for St. Elizabeths together, in a public process. As we move forward to create this vision, I have the following five goals:

- break down the barriers and open up the campus;
- link the campus to the surrounding neighborhoods;
- attract new uses that have community and citywide benefits;
- work together as partners in this process; and
- ensure that the process is open and inclusive.



District Has New Clean City Coordinator

Two weeks ago, I appointed attorney and civic activist Mary C. Williams the District of Columbia's Clean City Coordinator. Williams succeeds Vincent Spaulding, who served as the Clean City Coordinator for three years before retiring in October 2002.

Williams began working with the Office of the Clean City Coordinator in 2000 to spruce up her own neighborhood near Buzzard Point and South Capitol Street, SW. As a volunteer coordinator, she helped organize residents along the M Street corridor in southwest and led efforts to increase city services to the area. She advocated for stricter enforcement against delinquent property owners and sought greater police presence in areas where littering and illegal dumping often occurred.

Williams was recently re-elected as the Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner for single member district 6D-03. She is a member of Southwest Neighborhood Assembly, Inc. and the Citizens Advisory Council of the First District Metropolitan Police Department.

As always, the Clean City Initiative will continue its hard work in our magnificent city. One of the initiative's key programs is the Adopt-A-Block program. The program offers businesses; associations; non-profits; community, faith and civic organizations; and individuals the opportunity to make a difference in the District of Columbia and in their neighborhoods by helping to produce a cleaner and a more beautiful environment to live, work, and play in.

To participate, an organization or individual agrees to adopt a block, street, park, or spot. There are different levels of commitment and responsibility—but no one is left out and everyone is needed. Each level is just as important and significant in impact as the other.

For more information, visit the Clean City Initiative's Web site at: <http://cleancity.washingtondc.gov>. One of the interesting items you can find on the site is a rating, month by month, of the cleanest wards in the District of Columbia. Visit the site and see how your ward stacks up. Ms. Williams can be reached at maryc.williams@dc.gov, or (202) 671-1403.

District Activities



Mayor Williams test-drives a snow emergency vehicle near Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue and Malcolm X Boulevard in Southeast on Friday, February 7.



Mayor Williams and Councilmember Adrian Fenty honored former Washington Redskins Bobby Mitchell (at left) and George Starke, who were honored as "Hometown Heroes" for their community work.



Mayor Williams presented certificates of appreciation to the District's Hypothermia Watch Partners from the downtown business community, faith organizations, and nonprofit homeless advocacy groups who work with the District to provide homeless services this winter.



Mayor Williams surveys the landscape in a US Park Police helicopter, following a snowstorm that left six inches on the District on February 7. At left is Dan Tangherlini, director of the DC Department of Transportation, who accompanied Mayor on the tour.



Community News

- [Victims To Be Provided with Police Reports Free of Charge](#)
- [Crime and Prevention Forum Website](#)
- [The DCPS FY 2004 Recommended Operating Budget](#)

[Click here](#) to view news releases.

Upcoming Events

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|-----------------------|--|
| 02/15 to 02/16 | 17th Annual Black History Invitational Swim Meet 7 am—5 pm, Saturday 9 am—4 pm, Sunday University of the District of Columbia 4200 Connecticut Avenue, NW Aquatic Center |
| 02/19 | Public Meeting: Development Proposals for the Existing Convention Center Site 6 pm Washington Convention Center 900 9th Street, NW |
| 02/19 | DC Main Streets Workshop 6 pm—8:30 pm University of the District of Columbia 4200 Connecticut Avenue, NW (Bldg 44, Rm A-03) |
| 02/20 | DC Main Streets Workshop 6 pm—8 pm First Church of Christ Science 1770 Euclid Street, NW |
| 02/21 | Black History Quiz Bowl, for Ages 13—19 7 pm—9pm Banneker Recreation Center 2500 Georgia Avenue, NW |

[Click here](#) to view the Mayor's daily schedule.

